(d) the time likely to be taken for clearance of this proposal?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) to (d) Krishna Godavari Gas Network Limited (KGGNL) has applied for grant of authorization for laying, building and operating common carrier natural gas pipelines in the State of Andhra Pradesh. It has been mentioned that gas would be sourced from KG basin fields of Gujarat State Petroleum Corporation (GSPC). The policy adopted by the Government has been that authorization for laying, building and operating common carrier natural gas pipelines would be granted on the basis of gas sourcing tie-up with a producer, whose production profile is duly certified by Directorate General of Hydrocarbons (DGH). As production profile from GSPC's fields has not been certified by the DGH, the Government had decided to consider the issue of authorization to KGGNL after it is done.

Government of India in the meanwhile has established the Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board (PNGRB) and the provisions of Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board Act, 2006 (except Section 16) have been made effective from 01.10.2007. The PNGRB shall, *inter alia*, issue authorization to entities to lay, build, operate and expand a pipeline as a common carrier or contract carrier in accordance with the provisions of the PNGRB Act, 2006. KGGNL's application has been forwarded to PNGRB for consideration.

LPG connections in Andhra Pradesh

569. SHRI M.V. MYSURA REDDY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a gap in the demand and supply of LPG in the country particularly in Andhra Pradesh;

(b) if so, the details thereof, State-wise; and

(c) the action taken by Government to direct the PSU oil companies to release the LPG connections according to the demand of LPG in Andhra Pradesh?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) and (b) Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) have reported that at present, there is no overall shortage of LPG in the country including the State of Andhra Pradesh and LPG supplies to distributors are being made by the OMCs through indigenous production and imports in accordance with the genuine demand of customers registered with the LPG distributors.

OMCs have further reported that they have supplied 8450 TMT (Thousand Metric Tonnes) and 680 TMT of domestic LPG in the country and in the State of Andhra Pradesh respectively during the period-April, 2007-January, 2008 as against 8030 TMT and 650 TMT respectively during the corresponding period of last year.

However, OMCs had reported backlog in LPG supplies in Certain States in the country due to reduction in supply of bulk LPG by Reliance Industries Limited (RIL) & Essar Oil Limited in January 2008, delay in movement of bulk LPG by rail from Jamnagar to the Northern Region, increased demand in the States due to severe cold which resulted in panic booking by the customers, strikes by contract labour, agitational activities, delays in berthing of vessels at Haldia Port due to reduced draft, bandhs etc. The State-wise details are available with the Directors (Marketing) of the concerned OMCs.

3017RS—7A

Government has advised OMCs to liquidate the backlog in the States by operating the bottling plants on holidays and during extended hours. Increased bottling is also being done during the working days for early clearance of backlog.

(c) The enrolment of new LPG customers and release of new LPG connections is a continuous process. Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) have reported that at present, new LPG connections are available across the counter for genuine domestic customers on verification of documents as per laid down procedure.

OMCs have reported that as on 1.2.2008 they are having 108.4 lakh domestic LPG connections in the State of Andhra Pradesh. OMCs have released 4.6 lakh new LPG connections in the State of Andhra Pradesh during the period from April, 2007-January, 2008 as against 3.2 lakh connections during the corresponding period of last year.

Fiberglass LPG cylinders

570. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that his Ministry is seriously considering to introduce fiberglass LPG cylinders to prevent malpractice of LPG distribution;

(b) if so, whether the fiberglass LPG cylinders are also as safe as the existing LPG cylinders;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether a Committee has been constituted by the Department of Consumer Affairs to identify the problems being faced by LPG consumers, particularly with regard to malpractices in distribution; and

(e) if so, the recommendations made by the Committee?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) to (c) Government has conveyed "in principle" approval to the Public Sector Oil Markeing Companies (OMCs) for expanding the product line by way of introduction of composite cylinders for marketing domestic LPG, subject to there being no subsidy element in the LPG to be marketed through these composite cylinders. To start with, Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOC) along with Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL) and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL) intend to import some cylinders and do test marketing in selected cities.

OMCs are procuring LPG cylinders from cylinder manufacturers who have valid manufacturing licences from the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) and the Chief Controller of Explosives (CCoE). LPG cylinders procured by OMCs meet the required quality standards.

OMCs have reported that necessary approval of CCoE has been obtained for use of composite cylinders for LPG.

(d) and (e) No, Sir. No Committee has been constituted by the Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) to identify the problems being faced by LPG consumers.

Southern Gas Grid Project

571. PROF. P.J. KURIEN: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state: